

UNIVERSAL FINGER PRINTING URGED BY IDENTIFICATION EXPERTS

First Conceived as a Means for Apprehending Criminals, Science Has Broadened in Scope to Be an Aid to the Lost and Sorrowing---By James Norbert Doyle

FINGERPRINTS—horror of the criminal but the key to crime for the police—are rapidly becoming universal in their import.

Realizing the value of the fingerprint for other uses than running down the criminal, members of the International Association for Identification, will hold a four-day convention in this city, starting September 21, for the discussion of the question of universal fingerprinting, or the taking of the fingerprints of every man, woman and child in the United States, six years of age or over.

The question of universal fingerprinting is not a new one to experts for it has been discussed in the annual convention for the past three years. At the session to be held here it is expected that a resolution will be passed requesting Congress to enact a law requiring every person in the United States to be fingerprinted. Such a law, it is claimed, will prevent the possibility of anyone's losing his identity. To many persons, universal fingerprinting sounds absurd, but the Argentine Republic has realized the value of the fingerprint and has already adopted the movement which is yet in the stage of discussion in the United States. The Argentine Republic has the fingerprints of every citizen filed away.

In line with the question of universal fingerprinting, members of the International Association for Identification, which is composed of fingerprint experts from all over the country, plan to organize a national bureau to be located in Washington, which will contain the fingerprints of every resident in the United States.

Working in conjunction with the national bureau, State bureaus will be organized in every State in the country as well as the bureaus in the large cities which are now in operation. With the adoption of universal fingerprinting, such a thing as a person being unidentified in case of accident or death is held highly improbable.

By way of illustration, scores of persons are taken suddenly ill daily on the streets in various cities throughout the country and die before medical attention can be summoned. With the arrival of the police search is made of their clothing, and if such a search fails to bring forth a card or other means of identification, the body is taken to the morgue, held for several days, and then when not claimed is interred in an unmarked grave in Potter's field.

Under the proposed system when a person falls in the street and search of the clothing fails to bring forth any means of identification, the fingerprints will immediately be taken and classified. If the city identification bureau fails to have the print, a copy will be sent to the State bureau, and if that bureau fails to have the print in its files, it will be forwarded to the national bureau where the identification will be made.

Such a system, the fingerprint experts point out, would also readily establish the identity of the aphasia victim, found wandering aimlessly, or the lost boy, whose desire to see the world led him away from home. With the adoption of universal fingerprinting, the authorities of the national bureau would be notified as soon as the boy disappeared. Every lad who fell into the custody of the police authorities along the road would be fingerprinted and his prints sent to the bureau. Within a few days, the identification men believe, the boy would be restored to his family.

MEMBERS of the Identification Association declare that there were 40,000 unknown dead in the United States last year. This fact is one of their strongest arguments for universal fingerprinting.

At the last convention of the International Association for Identification held in Minneapolis, last August, the association went on record unanimously in favor of universal fingerprinting. The aim of the identification experts is clearly outlined in the resolution, which reads in part: "This association is in favor of establishing a central bureau of identification at the Court House in each county and a State bureau in the capital of each State and a national bureau at Washington, D. C."

"These several and various bureaus of identification shall in no way whatsoever be confused or connected with any criminal bureau of identification now in existence or which may come into existence at any later date."

"This association is in favor of fingerprinting each and every person of 6 years of age and over within these United States of America, and that three copies of each of these sets of prints be made: one to be deposited at the Court House of each county wherein the subject resides; one at the State bureau in the capital of that particular State and the third to be deposited in the National Bureau at Washington, D. C."

Washington has already been selected as the city in which the national bureau is to be located, for this city is regarded as the center of fingerprint activities by reason of the fact that two of the largest fingerprint bureaus are located here, namely the identification bureaus of the War Department and Navy Department.

It is probable that several Congressmen will be asked to attend the sessions of the identification

association to hear the arguments set forth in favor of universal fingerprinting, for since Congress will be asked to pass a law requiring all persons in the United States over 6 years of age to have their fingerprints taken, members of the association are anxious to have the solons get a knowledge of the proposed movement from discussions in the convention.

With the mention of fingerprints, one thinks immediately of their intimate association with police and crime.

Fingerprint experts are working to drive out the popular belief that fingerprints are used solely as a means of identifying criminals and in place of this false idea must come an appreciation of the fact that fingerprints, through universal fingerprinting, will become a great benefit to society by helpful identification.

Many large banking houses have already adopted fingerprints as a means of protection against the forger and impersonation of depositors. A Porto Rican bank has installed a fingerprint system for those who cannot sign their names to checks and deposits. Fingerprints instead of signatures are used as a means of identifying checks.

During the war more than 5,000,000 fingerprints were gathered by the War and Navy Departments. These bureaus through the medium of the fingerprint rendered the government valuable service. Approximately 1,300,000 prints are contained in the files of the Bureau of Identification at the Navy Department, these prints having been gathered since the bureau was organized, January 1, 1907.

J. H. Taylor is in charge of the Navy Bureau, which is probably one of the largest and best equipped bureaus of its kind in the country. During the war period 125 persons were employed in this bureau.

On the top floor of old Ford's Theater, Tenth near E street northwest, the identification Bureau of the War Department is located. This bureau is in charge of Walter S. Kaye.

The main purpose of the identity section in both the War and Navy departments is to identify unknown dead in time of war and to keep undesirable former service men from re-enlisting under assumed names.

Hardly a day passes that Mr.

BELITTLES WOMEN AS BELL RINGERS

Might Do for Wedding, But Can't Ring for Funeral, Scoffs Ancient Toller.

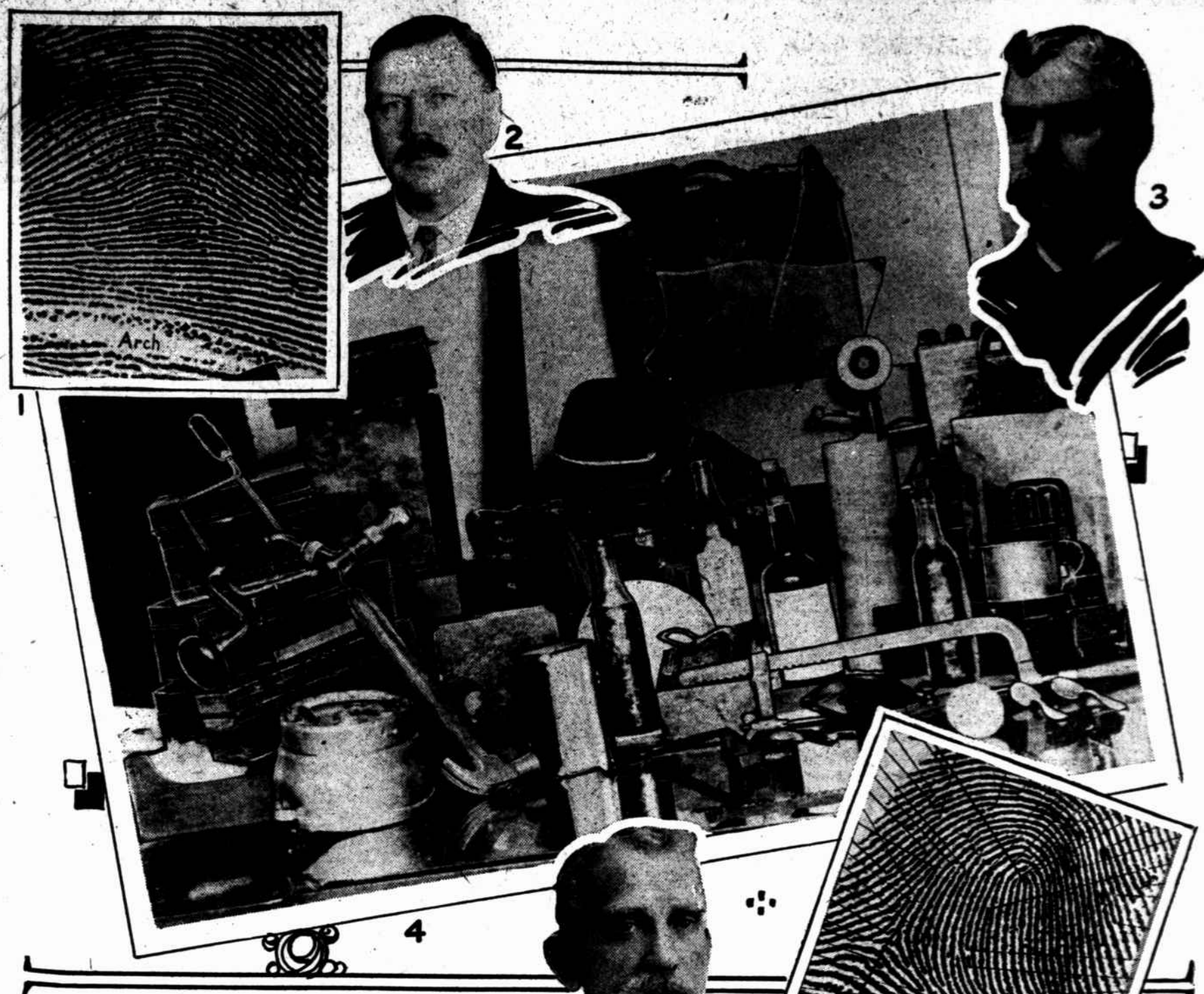
LONDON, Aug. 6.—Women campanologists, or belles of the bells, are seeking to rival men in the ancient and honorable occupation of change ringing.

There was one woman delegate, Miss E. K. Parker, at the all-England conference of bellringers held in the Church House, Westminster, recently, one among 70 men. She represented 200 women, who are members of the Ladies' Guild of Change Ringers. Miss Parker herself is the most skillful woman bell-ringer in the world. She has been ringing for twelve years, but declares she has still a great deal to learn of the art.

"We have members of our guild in all parts of the country," said Miss Parker, "and are gaining new recruits every day. Women are taking up ringing seriously, and are finding it most fascinating."

"At present there is no all-woman band of bell-ringers, but we are arranging to form one to play this summer in a London church. There is no reason why women should not make as good ringers as the best of the men."

One venerable man, who had been bell-ringer for "nigh on 50 years," was frankly hostile to the invasion of his craft. "Women," he said scornfully, "may be all right for ringing at a wedding or a christening, but they never will have the touch for tolling at a burial. They would make too much of a noise, and muddle it for sure."



Picture No. 1—Shows a pattern of a print known as an "arch," so called because the ridges run from one side to the other, making no backward turn.

No. 2—Detective Sergt. Fred Sandberg, fingerprint expert of the local police department, who has identified scores of persons through finger markings.

No. 3—Walter Kaye, in charge of the identification bureau of the War Department.

No. 4—Fingerprints can be located on some of the most insignificant articles. This fact is proven by the above picture, showing some articles from which Detective Sandberg has taken prints.

No. 5—Eugene Van Buskirk, superintendent of the National Bureau of Criminal Identification, of this city, who renders valuable aid to police of other cities through the exchange of fingerprints of criminals.

No. 6—Another pattern of print known as a "loop," showing seventy-one points of identification by lines drawn through the print.

No. 7—J. T. Burlingame, assistant to Detective Sandberg of the local police department.

No. 8—A pattern known as a "whorl," in which some of the ridges make a turn through at least one complete circuit.

No. 9—J. H. Taylor, of the identification bureau of the Navy Department. Mr. Taylor is in charge of probably one of the largest bureaus of the kind in the country and has written several books on fingerprinting.

which has rendered valuable service to police departments throughout the country.

This bureau, the National Bureau of Criminal Identification, is located at 639 Louisiana avenue northwest. Eugene Van Buskirk, a fingerprint expert of wide experience, is superintendent, and exchanges hundreds of photographs of criminals with various police departments in the United States.

FINGERPRINTS long ago proved their value to the police, and as a result police departments in every large city of the United States are equipped with identification bureaus. There is a possibility of "beating" the Bertillon method of identification, but the criminal knows he cannot beat the fingerprint.

Before the advent of the fingerprint system police had tried for years to find some means by which a criminal's identity could be permanently fixed. To this end the rogues gallery containing pictures of persons who had been convicted of various crimes came into being, but a criminal could easily assume a disguise, and it was found that while the rogues' gallery was of some help it did not permanently fix the identity of the criminal.

Photography was next brought into police circles in an effort to solve the problem. Photographs were taken of a criminal in various poses, full face, half face, profile and so on, but the criminal found a way to "beat" the photograph, for a contortion of the muscles of the features materially altered the value of a portrait. Thus the problem remained unsolved.

THEN came the Bertillon method, a method devoted to measuring the criminal, and while this method was effective, it was found that it was not an absolute means of identification.

The fingerprint system and its development on a scientific basis was due to the experiments of Sir Francis Galton, explorer and scientist, who was born at Birmingham, England, February 16, 1822, and who died in London in January, 1911. The first impetus toward deep investigation of fingerprints was received by Galton from Sir William Herschel, for the latter, while stationed in India, made a study of finger impressions and submitted a report to the government in 1877 urging the use of such impressions throughout the province as a means of fixing identity.

Because the subject of finger impressions was practically unheard-of, Herschel's recommendation was not acted upon, and Galton began investigation of the subject in 1888.

Various other persons undertook the study of fingerprints as a means of identification, and the system now generally in use was perfected by Sir E. R. Henry in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The Henry system was introduced in England and Wales in 1901 and worked with the greatest success. The record of fingerprints for England and Wales is kept at Scotland Yard.

SCOTLAND YARD, or New Scotland Yard, as it is called by Londoners, is probably the greatest criminal agency in the world. It is a gray stone building located geographically in the center of London and has a system of filing fingerprints so perfected that their agents can trace a criminal responsible for a crime committed in Kirkwall, in the northern part of Scotland, as easily as for one committed in Mayfair, in London.

Practically all the police departments in every large city in the United States have adopted the fingerprint system, which is one of the greatest assets to them in their work. Hundreds of criminals are run down and sentenced yearly because they left a "tell-tale" fingerprint behind when they "pulled a job."

In advocating universal fingerprinting the International Association for Identification makes it plain that the bureau which would be established, should that plan be adopted, shall in no way whatsoever be confused with any criminal bureau of identification now in existence.

PREPARATIONS for taking fingerprints are very simple. The fingerprint outfit consists of a strip of glass about five by six inches

upon which ink is spread in a thin coating. Then a paper form with spaces for the impressions is fixed beside the strip of glass, and all is in readiness.

Usually twelve prints are made from each individual to be recorded. First each of the ten fingers is printed separately, then the four fingers of each hand together. After the prints are taken they are classified and filed away in cabinets.

Detective Sergt. Fred Sandberg, in charge of the Bureau of Identification of the local police department, is considered one of the most capable fingerprint experts in the country. Through Sandberg's efforts scores of cases have been solved for the local department and in many instances he has rendered valuable service to the police departments in other cities by his knowledge of fingerprints.

From the most insignificant articles Sandberg has secured fingerprints which in many instances led to arrests. Sandberg is frequently called upon by various organizations to give lectures on the fingerprint system and has a collection of stereopticon views pertaining to the cases on which he has worked. Included in the views is a picture of the various articles from which he has secured prints, some of which are bottles, panes of glass, furniture, a child's bank, telephone slot boxes and many other articles.

WHEN called out on a case, the detective never overlooks a "bet" for upon the most insignificant object may be found the key that will aid in clearing up the case.

Only a short time ago the local police department was confronted with a series of early morning robberies and with the report of each case the detectives making the investigation were confident that the various "jobs" were the work of the same man.

Sandberg was called out on each case and made a thorough search for fingerprints, but in vain. The burglar suddenly ceased his operations and remained inactive for about two weeks, when he entered a house near Ninth and K streets northwest.

The house had been freshly painted and the burglar in gaining entrance to the house left a print of his thumb on the freshly painted window frame.

Sandberg removed the print and took it to police headquarters where he compared it with those in his file and established the identity of the burglar, whose arrest soon followed.

H. T. Burlingame, a member of the local police department, has been associated with Detective Sergt. Sandberg in identification work for the past five years, and is rapidly coming to the fore as a fingerprint expert of note.

THE work of the bureau of identification of the local police department has increased to such an extent that Maj. Harry L. Gessford, superintendent of police, will probably detail another assistant for that division within the next few days.

An idea of the value of the fingerprint system to the local police is clearly illustrated in the report of Detective Sandberg to the major and superintendent of police for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1920.

During that year, 346 identifications were made through the fingerprint system while only forty were made through the Bertillon system.

According to the report, Detective Sandberg or his assistant were called upon during the period ending June 30, 1920, to visit and examine seventy-four scenes of crime, for possible fingerprint evidence and succeeded in obtaining such evidence in forty-three cases.

"In some of these cases," the report states, "the prints were from the palm of the hands or from the tips of the fingers, the patterns being complete enough to make a search of our files, but there was sufficient detail in all of them to establish the identity of the guilty person if apprehended. In several cases where arrests were made, the officers secured confessions after the guilt of the accused had been established through fingerprint evidence; in other cases it was the means of establishing the innocence of persons suspected."

IN HIS REPORT, Sandberg cites a case where fingerprints were the means of identifying a man who was shot and killed, February 24, 1920, by a member of the detective bureau, when resisting arrest after having burglarized a house and carried away several thousands of dollars worth of silver.

Shortly before the wounded man died at the Emergency Hospital, several detectives questioned him in an effort to establish his identity, but were unsuccessful in their efforts.

Following the death of the man, Detective Sandberg took his fingerprints and photographed and sent them to several cities and penal institutions. He was identified by the bureau at the United States penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kan., and New Jersey State penitentiary at Trenton, N. J., as a man who was received at the latter institution on September 26, 1912, under sentence of 8 1/2 to 17 years for burglary, and who escaped on June 24, 1919.

Both Sandberg and Burlingame have frequently rendered assistance to the different government departments in identification work.

TO LEAVE the question of the use of the fingerprint to the police, that of universal fingerprinting is rapidly coming to the fore as a question of importance and the convention of the International Association for Identification will be national in its scope.

The program of the sessions has not been completed as yet but it is known that the highest authorities on fingerprints will be in attendance at the sessions and read various papers on the subject. J. H. Taylor, chief of the Naval Identification Bureau, is chairman of the entertainment committee and is arranging an elaborate program for the entertainment of the visitors.

Officers of the association are: H. W. Caldwell, Oakland, Cal., president; Irvin P. Jones, Minneapolis, Minn., first vice president; A. T. Henroe, Leavenworth, Kan., secretary-treasurer; Al. Dunlap, Chicago, editor; Fred Sandberg, Washington, D. C., sergeant-at-arms.

The board of directors of the association is composed of the following: James J. Anderson, Vancouver, B. C.; Maurice O'Neill, New Orleans, La.; Paul N. Waggoner, Memphis, Tenn.; G. A. Benson, Wau-pun, Wis.; and Leroy Goodwin, Youngstown, Ohio.

Members of the association are confident in the near future "the tell-tale fingerprint," the oft used theme of the fiction writer, will be stripped of its surroundings of mystery and adapt itself to a matter-of-fact means of helpful identification.

Both Wear Bridal Wreaths



Polish bridegroom "all dolled up" in floral head-piece at wedding, after the national custom. His paper roses and forget-me-nots are loaned by the bride from her ample supply.